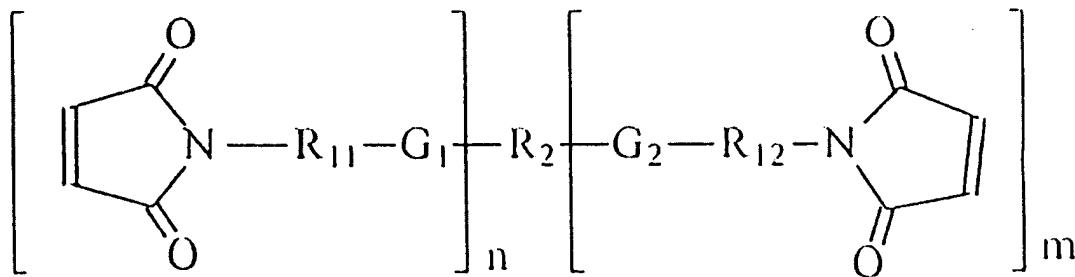


What is Claimed:

1. A method for curing an active single phase water compatible actinic radiation curable composition, comprising: irradiating a water compatible non emulsion, non dispersing compound, water, and a maleimide derivative of the formula:



wherein n and m each independently represent an integer of 1 to 5, and the total of m and n is 6 or smaller;

R_{11} and R_{12} each independently represent a linking group selected from the group consisting of an alkylene group, an alicyclic group, an arylalkylene group, and a cycloalkylalkylene group;

G_1 and G_2 each represent an ester linkage selected from the group consisting of $-COO-$ and $-OCO-$;

and R_2 represents a linking chain having an average molecular weight of 100 to 100,000 selected from the group consisting of (poly)ether (poly)ester linking chains, or mixtures thereof in which at least one organic group selected from straight or branched chain alkylene group, straight or branched chain alkylene group having a hydroxyl group, alicyclic group, aryl group, arylalkylene group, and a cycloalkylalkylene group connected via at least one linkage selected from the group consisting of an ether or ester linkage.

2. The method according to Claim 1 wherein said water compatible compound is selected from the group consisting of acrylate resins; methacrylate resins; acrylic dispersions; urethane resins; vinyl alcohols such as ethylene vinyl alcohol and ethylene vinyl alcohol; vinyl alcohol copolymers such as ethylene vinyl alcohol copolymer; polysaccharides; polysucrose; and glucose.

3. The method according to Claim 1 wherein the need to dry the actinic radiation curable composition prior to irradiation is eliminated.
4. The method according to Claim 1 wherein the need to dry the actinic radiation curable composition after irradiation is eliminated.
5. The method according to Claim 1 wherein R₂ of the maleimide derivative is a (poly)ether or (poly)ester linking chain, having a molecular weight of greater than 200.
6. The method according to Claim 2 further comprising adding a compound copolymerizable with the said maleimide derivative and water compatible compound.